FICHE NUMBER

233021

THRU

233022

NOT AVAILABLE FROM EDRS

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 233 020 SP 022 897

AUTHOR Griffin, Barbara; Gillis, M. K.
TITLE Preservice Teachers' Attitudes Toward Sex-Affirmative Teaching and Professional Behaviors.
PUB DATE May 83
NOTE 11p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Early Childhood Education; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Individual Differences; Instructional Materials; *Preservice Teacher Education; *Sex Fairness; *Sex Stereotypes; *Teacher Attitudes; *Teacher Influence

ABSTRACT

Undergraduates enrolled in upper division teacher education courses responded to a questionnaire about their attitudes toward sex-affirmative teaching and professional behaviors. Of the volunteers, 18 respondents were seeking certification as teachers of young children, 35 as elementary school teachers, and 36 as secondary school teachers. Findings indicated that preservice teachers of young children were in strong agreement with sex-affirmative teaching and professional behaviors, while the average scores of the elementary and secondary school groups indicated moderate agreement. It appears that the significance of the higher scores of teachers of young children is encouraging, since research has indicated that, the younger the child, the more influence the teacher has on modifying sex-role stereotypical beliefs. Sample items from the questionnaire are included. (JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED233020

PRESERVICE TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD SEX-AFFIRMATIVE TEACHING AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS

Barbara Griffin

M. K. Gillis

Southwest Texas State University

San Marcos, Texas 78666

May 1983

SP022897

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

M. K. Gillis

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Preservice Teachers' Attitudes Toward Sex-Affirmative Teaching & Professional Behaviors

Research has documented that teachers and administrators in the past have had different expectations, both academically and behaviorally, for boys and girls (Safilios-Rothschild, 1979). This, combined with the fact that children are already aware of sex-role stereotypes by the time they enter school (Reilly, 1979; Tyson, 1980), can promote a learning environment that limits a child's potential.

Since the most important factor in the school setting seems to be the teacher, teachers must provide a learning environment free from sex-role stereotypes. Teachers must encourage each child to meet his/her potential irrespective of sex. Sex-affirmative teaching behaviors create this environment and can modify sex-role stereotypes held by children (Gillis, 1981). For the purpose of this paper sex-affirmative teaching behavior can be described as materials and behaviors that recognize the impact of sex-role socialization and make an effort to overcome its effect (Resource Center on Sex Roles in Education, 1974).

Research Objective

The purpose of this study was to investigate how

tomorrow's teachers feel about sex-affirmative teaching and professional behaviors. The researchers were aware that few studies have been published related to current attitudes of pre-service teachers toward sex-affirmative teaching behaviors. Further literature investigation revealed that there are relatively few programs designed to promote sex-equity awareness in our educational system. In texts used with pre-service teachers less than one percent of the content addresses the issue of sex-equity and many actually perpetuate stereotypical attitudes and behaviors (Sadker, Sadker, & Hicks, 1980).

Method

The population chosen for this study consisted of 89 undergraduates enrolled in upper division teacher education courses at Southwest Texas State University in the Spring of 1983. Of the volunteers, 18 respondents were seeking certification as Teacher of the Young Child; 35 as Elementary teachers; and 36 as Secondary teachers.

Students were asked to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with sex-affirmative teaching and professional behaviors on an examiner-created 35 item questionnaire. Twenty-five items dealt with teaching behaviors and 10 items dealt with professional behaviors. Examples of the items are provided in Figure 1.

- -

INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

Respondents indicated their level of agreement or disagreement with each item on a 5 point Likert scale. Possible scores ranged from 35 to 175 with higher scores indicating more agreement with sex-affirmative teaching and professional behaviors.

The average score was 144.9 indicating moderate agreement with sex-affirmative teaching and professional behaviors. Scores ranged from 108-171. None of the scores fell below 92 which would have indicated a respondent's disagreement with sex-affirmative teaching and professional behaviors. Means and standard deviations by group are presented in Table 1. The Teacher of the Young Child group's scores indicated strong agreement with sex-affirmative teaching and professional behaviors, while the average scores of the Elementary and Secondary groups indicated moderate agreement.

- -

INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

- -

One way analysis of variance indicated a significant difference between group means, ($F(2,86) = 3.75$, $p < .05$). The Duncan Multiple Range test revealed that the mean of the Teachers of the Young Child group was significantly higher than the Elementary ($p < .05$) and Secondary ($p < .01$)

groups. The means of the latter two groups did not differ.

Discussion

The results of the study indicate that the pre-service teachers in the sample population were moderately supportive of creating a classroom environment in which sex-affirmative teaching and professional behaviors would be incorporated in their daily interactions with students. The results seem to suggest that these pre-service teachers are aware of the importance that a sex-affirmative environment can ahve on a child's potential and are willing to strive to meet these goals in the classroom.

The higher scores obtained by the pre-service teachers seeking certification as Teacher of the Young Child were very encouraging. Research has indicated that the younger the child the more influence the teacher has on modifying sex-role stereotypical beliefs (Guttentag, & Bray, 1976). Pre-service teachers in this group seem to have a strong commitment to creating a sex-affirmative environment. Since it has been documented that exposure and instruction in non-biased techniques can produce changes in sexist thinking and can increase the use of strategies that are considered sex-affirmative (Griffin, 1982; Grandinetti, 1979) it would be interesting to investigate teaching techniques

and procedures that were utilized in these pre-service students' college classes.

It is important to remember the significance the cooperating teacher has on later adopted teaching styles of pre-service teachers (Funk, Long, Keithley, Hoffman, 1982). Therefore the university supervisor must be able to recognize and disspell stereotypical myths that are reinforced during the pre-service teachers' first classroom experience.

The results of this study are encouraging. It is possible that we are witnessing societal impact on young people's awareness; the influence of Title IX on the educational institution; the women's movement; and new sex-affirmative materials that are slowly making their way into the current teacher-education programs.

Sex equity continues to be a major goal of the education profession. Research has shown that teachers can make a difference, that sex-affirmative behaviors can be learned, and that these skills, when accepted as part of the daily classroom environment, help all children meet their potential.

REFERENCES

Funk, F., Long, B., Keithley, M.A. & Hoffman, J. The cooperating teacher a most significant other: A competent humanist. Action in Teacher Education, 1982, Fall, 57-64.

Gillis, M. Sex-role stereotypes: Evidence that school can make a difference. Educational Horizons, 1981, 89, 182-186.

Grandinetti, J. The effects of instruction on the sexist attitudes of pre-service teachers. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, California, April, 1979.

Griffin, B. Title IX: Are counselors meeting the challenge? The School Counselor, 1982, 29, 204-207.

Guttentag, M. & Bray, H. Undoing sex stereotypes. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976.

Reilly, M. Eliminating sexism: A challenge to educators. Social Education, 1979, 43, 312-316.

Resource Center on Sex-Roles in Education. Washington, D.C. National Institute of Education, 1974.

Sadker, M. Sadker, D. & Hicks, T. The one percent solution? Sexism in teacher education texts. Phi Delta Kappan, 1980, 61, 550-553.

Safilios-Rothschild, C. Sex-role socialization and sex discrimination: A synthesis and critique of the literature. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education, 1979.

Tyron, B. Beliefs about male & female competence held by kindergartens and second graders. Sex Roles, 1980, 6, 85-97.

FIGURE 1

SAMPLE ITEMS

IN THE CLASSROOM

Teachers should.....

Expect both male and female students to have a variety of interests, aptitudes, and abilities.	SA A N D SD
Provide corrective (extra help for learners with problems) instruction in math as well as in reading.	SA A N D SD
Designate seating, lines, and work assignments by sex (e.g., males run AV equipment, females decorate bulletin boards).	SA A N D SD
Realize that males will be more capable in math and science and females more capable in the language arts.	SA A N D SD

AS PROFESSIONALS

Teachers should.....

Examine their own sex role socialization experiences and consider the impact these experiences have on present behavior, beliefs, attitudes, and values.	SA A N D SD
Read literature related to sexism and sex-role stereotyping in education, particularly as related to their teaching level and/or content area of responsibility.	SA A N D SD
Request and participate in workshops on understanding/eliminating sexism and sex-role stereotyping in education.	SA A N D SD

TABLE I

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS BY GROUP

Group	X	SD	n
Secondary Majors	141.00	9.24	36
Elementary Majors	143.46	13.92	35
Teachers of Young Children Majors	150.33	11.06	18